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NRC Schedules Meeting to Discuss Safety Performance of Westinghouse Nuclear Fuel Plant in Columbia

The U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with Westinghouse management in Columbia, S.C., on Tuesday, May 21, to discuss the results of a regulatory safety performance review at the company's commercial nuclear fuel fabrication plant.

The meeting will be held at 1 p.m. in the Red Room of the South Carolina State Museum, 301 Gervais St. in Columbia. The meeting will be open to the public and media, and NRC officials will be available after the formal presentation to answer questions.

The NRC staff assessed performance at Westinghouse during a period beginning Jan. 1, 2011 and ending Dec. 31, 2012, in the areas of safety operations, radiological controls, facility support and special topics. The NRC staff review determined that Westinghouse continued to conduct its activities safely and securely, protecting public health and the environment.

The review concluded that one previously identified area needing improvement, in safety operations, will remain open while Westinghouse continues to complete its Nuclear Criticality Safety Improvement Project. NRC inspectors determined the project had not fully met its objectives, and the NRC will continue to monitor and review the project. The NRC plans to augment its core inspection program with additional inspections to monitor and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the improvement project, but found no other areas needing improvement during the performance review period.

“The NRC inspects nuclear fuel facilities such as Westinghouse and monitors their performance on an ongoing basis,” said NRC Region II Administrator Victor McCree, “We issue inspection reports and hold these meetings near each facility to discuss our oversight and answer any questions local residents may have.”

A copy of the NRC letter to the company regarding the performance review is publicly available on the NRC website.